

Apostles of Mischief

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MR. WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN has passed. He has taken a place with Henry Clay, with Stephen A. Douglas, with Horace Greeley, in the ranks of those leaders who influenced their generation profoundly, but who failed in the achievement of their crowning ambition. And it is precisely at this time, when personalities have lost their edge, when the chorus of kindly eulogy is fading away, that we may best strive in a spirit of passionless inquiry to evaluate the influence of his life and leadership on the generation which knew him best.

From the day when he burst from the obscurity of a second-class lawyer in a country town to the undisputed leadership of a great political party, to that day thirty years later when he voiced the determination to put the Bible into the law, and if possible into the Constitution itself, he was the spokesman who phrased in brilliant rhetoric the desires and hopes of thousands of his fellow countrymen. It is conceivable that the dead leader was sincerely following the path of right and duty as God gave him to see the way. If so, we can voice no word of personal censure. But the tendency to which he gave such brilliant utterances and of which he was in the end the avowed champion, we must denounce as a national menace. And this spirit is not dead. Under his leadership it assumed solidarity and importance, and though the leader has passed away, the spirit goes marching on.

THE SPIRIT OF BRYANISM

And what was the spirit of Bryan? It was a passion for religious legislation, for fusing the diverse spirits of religious belief and legal compulsion, which the Fathers of the Constitution had decreed should be forever divorced. It was and is a retrogressive spirit, looking backward and not forward along the lines of popular government. It was the supreme paradox of his enigmatic career that Mr. Bryan should turn in his later days from the broad road of radicalism to the straight and narrow

way of ultra-conservatism. "They tell us we are anarchists," he had cried to his followers almost jubilantly in the brave days of '96, and thirty years later no prophet of Islam was more intolerant in striving to impose on others the yoke of his narrow sectarianism. In his earlier days he was the avowed apostle of reform, ever looking to the development of democratic principles and eager to make experiments, however rash or ill considered, in popular government. But when he announced his intention of making religion, and by "religion" he meant sectarianism, a part of our Constitution and our laws, the forward-looking leader executed a *volte face* and entered on the path that leads backward through history to autocracy and tyranny.

THE SPIRIT OF THE CONSTITUTION

It seems almost superfluous to recall anew the great principle of religious liberty which the far-seeing fathers of the republic placed in our fundamental law. We do not deny that "the people of the United States," the same power which framed the present Constitution, may alter or abolish it, may impose religious tests for voting or holding office, may prescribe a state religion or proscribe all religions, may tear down the republic and rear a monarchy on its ruins, all by the perfectly legal method of constitutional enactment. But since the present Constitution remains the fundamental law of the land, we may briefly recall the purpose of the statesmen of 1789. This is stated briefly by Judge Joseph Story, the great commentator on the Constitution: "Owing to the bigotry of religious pride and the intolerance of sect exemplified in our colonies as well as in the annals of foreign governments, it was deemed advisable to exclude from the national government all power to act upon the subject" (of religion).

This exclusion was first indicated in the body of the Constitution in the third section of Article VI: ". . . no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States." To-day this enactment seems conservative, but when it was first laid down it was a radical step in the science of government. The very States from which the new

government sought to derive its powers, not only prescribed state religions, but enacted various drastic measures against dissenters. In Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Connecticut, Congregationalism was the established church. New York and New Jersey had set up the Episcopal creed as a requirement for holding office. Virginia, at that time the proudest and wealthiest of the commonwealths, went even farther in religious legislation. With a fury worthy of the Roman Empire against the early Christians, she forbade within her borders the meetings of the harmless Quakers and prescribed exile for all members of that sect found within the limits of the state. The threat of punishment extended to the masters of vessels who should land these dissenters on her shores, and the draconian penalty of death was enacted against those who returned for the third time. Such was "the bigotry of religious pride and the intolerance of sect" at the time when the Fathers, in the words of Lincoln, "brought forth upon this continent a new nation conceived in liberty."

But this third section of Article VI was only the faint beginning of religious tolerance in the federal government. It was considered insufficient by no less a patriot and statesman than Thomas Jefferson of Virginia. Born, like Washington, in a colony where dissenters were forced by law to build churches for the established religion, a witness to the spirit of bigotry which had hunted men to death for their religious opinions, the author of the Declaration of Independence drafted the first amendment to the Constitution and labored incessantly in the cause of religious freedom until it was ratified by the states. This amendment in fifteen words forever denied to the federal government the mischievous powers which Virginia and the other colonies had so long exercised to the detriment of harmony and freedom: "Congress shall make no law respecting an established religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

THE MIND OF WASHINGTON

In view of the avowed purpose of Mr. Bryan and his followers "to put the Bible into the Constitution," it might be interesting to consider the views of the first

President of the republic on that document in its relation to religion. During his term of office a Massachusetts bishop had sent him a letter of protest calling attention to the fact that the name of God was nowhere to be found in our fundamental law. Washington's reply was uncompromising. The name of God was excluded from the Constitution "because that pertains to religion, but this belongs to government." Even today this seems an extreme view. Little protest, we imagine, would have met the introduction into that document of the name of the Deity, which had already found a place in the Declaration and was later to be stamped upon the coinage. We may or may not agree with this judgment of the Father of his Country, but the statement is a startling revelation of his purpose. There were to be no half measures. State and Church, government and religion, were to be forever sundered.

It is a further significant fact that during the deliberations of the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia, *no prayers were offered at any time during the sessions of that body*. Nor was this omission due to carelessness or forgetfulness. It was a course adopted against the protests of a minority. It was a deliberate break with the universal practice of every legislative assembly in the colonies and in the Continental Congress itself. Since that day both the Senate and the House of Representatives and every state legislature have opened and closed sessions with prayer. This omission of the Constitutional Convention stands as a solitary instance to emphasize the grim determination of these statesmen that in the business of forging a government there should be no interference of creed and no opportunity given to "the bigotry of religious pride and the intolerance of sect."

Let us turn again to Judge Story, the great commentator on the Constitution. He was a contemporary of the men who framed it. He heard them tell the story of their momentous deliberations. For twenty years he sat on the Supreme Bench by the side of Marshall and aided that great federalist in welding a nation into solidarity. In the fulness of his years and of his powers he prepared his great commentary. In the nature of things such an authority can never rise again. Of the motives which

guided the fathers in their deliberations, he speaks from unimpeachable knowledge.

"The statesmen who framed the Constitution," he asserts, "were too well versed in the history of government and too well acquainted with the conflicts of the people in the colonial states not to dread and anticipate the abuses of authority resulting from the greed of power and the selfishness of sect."

ESTABLISHING "DOMESTIC TRANQUILLITY"

An avowed purpose of the "more perfect government" which they had set their hands to form was "to establish domestic tranquillity." They saw with unerring vision that in every government in the history of the world the greatest enemy of domestic concord was religious differences and religious laws. Therefore these far-sighted men resolved on an experiment almost unprecedented in the history of mankind, a government absolutely divorced from an established religion, from a religious test for office and without the prohibition of any creed. They looked across the seas at the mother country from which they had sprung. They saw their former brethren divided into four distinct classes of varying political privileges and disabilities. Between the members of the Established Church on the one hand, and the Dissenting Protestants, Catholics and Jews on the other, there was no pretence of civil equality. If such an inequality, based on religious belief, were allowed to take root and flourish in the new government, then the high-sounding phrases of the Declaration would be but a specious bit of brilliant rhetoric. So did the fathers read "the history of government," and so were they constrained to break with the past.

This mischievous distinction of religious classes had flourished with a few notable exceptions among the colonists. The great principle of religious tolerance laid down by William Penn: "We must yield the liberties we demand" had been disregarded elsewhere. The original colonists of Massachusetts, who had come to seek freedom of worship, denied that same freedom to others. Within fifteen years of their arrival they had tried, condemned and banished Roger Williams on the formal charge of asserting the heinous doctrine that "the civil

power has no jurisdiction over the conscience." With such an astounding heresy these victims of religious persecution would have nothing to do. In 1656 the first Quakers, two friendless women, arrived in the port of Boston, and the civil authorities promptly locked them in jail and condemned their books of devotion to be burned. Undeterred by their experience a second band of Quakers sought refuge in the same colony a few years later and the Massachusetts law makers busied themselves in devising new and drastic measures against these innovators. The penalties affixed to these anti-Quaker laws left nothing to be desired in thoroughness. They included flogging, imprisonment at hard labor, cutting off one or both ears, boring the tongue with a hot iron and finally reached capital punishment in 1659 when two were hanged on Boston Common. Such was the result of that "bigotry of religious pride and the intolerance of sect" at which the new Constitution was to aim a death blow by prescribing that "Congress shall make no law . . . prohibiting the free exercise" of religion.

COTTON MATHER

The followers of Mr. Bryan might study to advantage the life and achievements of Cotton Mather. In temperament and character these two men had much in common. The spirit of Bryan was foreshadowed in the seventeenth century by the fanatic Mather, even as the spirit of Mather was revived in the twentieth by the zealous Bryan. Each had a deep vein of religious fervor and each sought to find in the Bible the source of civil law, or rather, to wrest the scriptures to his own view of government. Possessed of an emotional eloquence, both of these men labored with undoubted sincerity to lay the yoke of a narrow sectarianism on their generation. Mather's popular leadership bore bitter fruit in the Salem witchcraft frenzy. Before that orgy of persecution was over, fifty-five innocent victims were put to the torture, twenty were executed and an eternal dishonor cast both upon the legislature which passed these laws and the courts which had enforced them. Yet Massachusetts was not alone in its infamy. It was a fact known to the framers of the Constitution, although seemingly forgotten

by their posterity, that every one of the original colonies had laws against witchcraft similar to those which did such bloody execution in Salem in 1692. Only a Mather had been lacking to kindle the fagots into flame. From such a welter of superstition, sectarianism and statecraft, the new government was to be made free by its founders.

PETTY RELIGIOUS LAWS

But it was not merely these outstanding cases of religious persecution which influenced the fathers in their deliberations. It was the multiplicity of petty laws inspired by religious bodies which had most of all fostered discord and threatened the peace of the colonies. The "Blue Laws" of New England have been given undeserved publicity, since every colony from New Hampshire to the Carolinas had cluttered up its statute books with laws and penalties against every violation of the moral code from "speaking lightly of the scriptures" to "swimming in the waters and unnecessary and unreasonable walking on the Lord's Day." In the wake of these laws there had followed suspicion, bickering, feuds, fines, imprisonment and the countless evils which had lighted the religious fires in every country of the old world. The conviction was gaining ground that sins and personal violations of the moral code were matters of conscience and church discipline, and that to invoke against the sinner the civil arm was a proven failure. In the strength of that conviction, the men who framed the Constitution cut apart with one blow the tangled strands of government and religion.

THE EFFECT ON THE STATES

It was a far cry from the enactment of this principle in the federal government to its incorporation into the constitutions of the several states. With their domestic policy the federal government had nothing to do. A century ago the consciousness of state sovereignty and the opposition to federal dominance was far stronger than it is today. And yet it is one of the outstanding features of our national development that the states unanimously acquiesced in the great principle of the division of church and state. One by one, as the various constitutions came into being, they incorporated the principle laid down

in Philadelphia in 1789. At the close of a century the situation was thus summed up by an authority on civil government: "All the state constitutions provide that no law can be passed establishing a religion, no person can be compelled to attend any form of religious service or contribute to the support of any religion. No restraint can be put on the free exercise or expression or promulgation of any religion." So far had we progressed from the days of Cotton Mather and the theocracy of the colonies in rearing the national edifice of religious freedom on the cornerstone laid in 1789.

But the growth and development of religious freedom had been noticeably retarded in the last quarter century. A class of wrong-headed, narrow-minded sectarians, of whom Mr. Bryan was an outstanding type, have turned their backs on the future and are striving to lead us through the maze of religious legislation to the unrest and discord of our early days. The "bigotry of religious pride and the intolerance of sect" are spirits hard to exorcise from the body politic. Well had our forefathers dreaded them. In the present generation these spirits are menacing anew our domestic tranquillity. These apostles of mischief, led by Mr. Bryan and his successors, are striving in every state of the Union to enact into law their own religious prejudices. They are turning the stream of government back to the days of the Puritans and the Blue Laws. Dissatisfied with the perfect freedom granted them to worship God according to their own conscience, they are striving to make that conscience the law of the land. One by one they are enacting into law, with the sanction of fines and penalties, their various fetiches and taboos. The fathers of the republic had good reason "to dread and anticipate" in the words of Story, "abuses of authority resulting from the greed of power and the selfishness of sect."

OUR PRESENT "BLUE LAWS"

The various nations of Europe who saw the lighting of the torch of religious liberty, showed their admiration by the sincere flattery of imitation. But during the quarter century just past, our national mania for enacting laws and our weakness in enforcing them have altered

that admiration to something very like contempt. These weak laws for the most part have their origin in the strong pressure of some religious sect. They strive to impose on all men an obligation which some religious community considers a sacred duty. "We have become a Carrie Nation," exclaimed one newspaper wit who saw in the intolerant amazon from Kansas the embodiment of our national spirit. Fired by "the intolerance of sect" these zealots would impose on all, irrespective of their personal beliefs, what they consider a religious duty. They would make men good by making them unhappy. They are kin to the English Puritans of whom Macaulay said that they forbade bear-baiting "not because it gave pain to the bear, but because it gave pleasure to the spectator."

To what alarming extent has the list of forbidden amusements already come! In Texas, the playing of cards is forbidden even to transcontinental travelers passing through the state. The struggle to pass laws against boxing is being waged by religious zealots everywhere and with a large and increasing measure of success. Horse-racing has been hunted down and proscribed in many states and the war is still on. Sunday baseball has fallen under the ban, and organized efforts are being made to include Sunday "movies," Sunday theaters and every form of Sunday amusement. The Sunday Observance League is active and aggressive, and its officials are striving everywhere to influence law-making bodies to restore the Puritan Sabbath. The fight against tobacco is stubborn and insidious. Laws of varying stringency have already been passed against the cigarette and this is admittedly the first line of attack. The passage of the eighteenth amendment is too obvious an instance of the growing power of these religious bodies, as it is their crowning triumph, to call for comment here. And in the meantime the peoples of Europe stare with amazement to contemplate these successive invasions of personal liberty in "the land of the free." The attitude of the foreigner is rather neatly expressed in the irony of the steward on the English ship approaching the harbor of New York. "Gentlemen, the bar will close in ten minutes. We are approaching the Statue of Liberty!"

Where will this tendency end? It is no exaggeration to say that if the three-quarters of the century still remaining are to see as many religious prejudices enacted into law as the first quarter has witnessed, we will be back again in the narrow sectarianism of our colonial days, and the work of the builders of the republic who wrought the edifice of religious liberty will be, in large measure, undone.

THOMAS JEFFERSON AND RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

If the great work of establishing religious freedom is to be credited to one man in our history more than another, that man is Thomas Jefferson. He framed both the first amendment to the Constitution and the Virginia statute on Religious Freedom which became the model for every succeeding state to follow. We may quote from a eulogy of this distinguished man, delivered in 1902.

"In the preamble to this statute Jefferson set forth the main reasons urged by those who believed in religious freedom. Let me call attention to some of the more important ones. He said, in the first place, that to attempt to compel people to accept a religious doctrine, by act of law, was to make, not Christians, but hypocrites. He said, too, that there was no earthly judge who was competent to sit in a case and try a man for his religious opinions. What could be more true? No man who has religious convictions himself bears them so lightly that he can lay them aside and act as a judge when another man's religious convictions are involved. He suggested that religion does not need the support of government to enable it to overcome error. Tell me that Jefferson lacked reverence for religion. He rather places a low estimate upon the strength of religion, who thinks that the wisdom of God must be supplemented by the force of man's puny arm."

This eulogy was delivered in a speech on "The Statute for Establishing Religious Freedom." The orator was William Jennings Bryan.

Apostles of Charity

MOTHER MARIANNE

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FOR sixteen years the Sisters of Christian Doctrine have labored on the lower East Side amid many difficulties, face to face with many obstacles and somewhat lost on account of the isolated condition of the district, but today we take new courage when we hear that this magnificent body of women is about to undertake seriously the work of religious education among the foreign-born and their immediate descendants, and when we speak of religious education we are not referring to the memorizing of the catechism.

I remember in the good old days we used to tell them if the child would only memorize the catechism, the meaning of it would come to him. That was the expression. It would come to him as he grew up on some ethereal wave like the radio. Well, we did not, of course, refer to that sort of religious education, nor do we mean the informing of the intellect on religious subjects because a religious education must be the harmonious development of the whole thing, the memory, the intellect, the will—in other words, the forming of character. And nothing short of that will save the individual, uphold society, uphold the State, or clarify our holy Faith.

I will ask you in spirit to make a little visit with me to the Cherry Hill district, as it was some sixteen years ago, when we first undertook under the direction of his Eminence the late Cardinal Farley, to try out there an experiment.

We had some experience in other parts of the city. We knew something of the condition of our immigrant population. We knew something of the leakage that was going on among the population. We had reached certain conclusions born from our experience as to the causes of that leakage and the possible remedy and we wanted to find a place where the conditions were as bad as possible in order to give our theories the fullest possible test and when we chose that district, roughly bounded by the Manhattan

*An address delivered at the annual convention of the National Council of Catholic Women in New York City.

Bridge, Brooklyn Bridge, the Bowery and the East River, I believe we undoubtedly got what we were looking for.

TIDE OF YOUNG LIFE IN THE STREETS.

Let me just give you a picture to try to visualize for you the material setting, the background in which these young lads down there are living because we have come to see that we cannot understand any soul outside of its environment.

This is old New York. The red brick houses, with their high pitched roofs and their dormer windows, date back to Revolutionary or even pre-Revolutionary times. From No. 1 Cherry street, General Washington set out for his inauguration as the first President of the United States, and I may say in passing that practically no improvements have been made in these dwellings since the time of George Washington.

Well, they must have been pleasant homes in those days with broad gardens, stretching down to the water's edge, and the blooming cherry orchards from which the street gets its name, but the streets have gone long since and in the little yard back of each dwelling, about twenty feet from the rear wall stands that abomination of desolation, the rear tenement.

The houses that were intended to form comfortable homes for one family now house from sixteen to twenty families, according to the number of floors, four families on a floor. The apartment averages two rooms, that is to say the tenant pays for two rooms and gets one room and a dark closet, and into those restrictive quarters came pouring the tide of immigration as it passed through the gateway at Ellis Island because the Battery is conveniently near.

First came the sturdy Irish stock, and they lived there comfortably enough until they were shouldered out as the tide swelled, and as material conditions improved they moved away and others came in whose standards of living were not the same, but all of them, with the exception of the Jewish element, country-bred peasant stock; they came from the lemon groves of Sicily and the vineyards of Andalusia and the leaf-grown slopes of Greece, the Poles, the Lithuanians, the Russians, all of them country people,

used to the open spaces, and now just try to visualize what it is to have this vigorous seething tide of humanity, hemmed up in the narrow streets and tiny rooms of these tenements.

Of course, where you have so much force and energy and little outlet an explosion almost inevitably is bound to occur. The results was, of course, that the tide of young life exploded out into the street. That was practically their living room. There were no playgrounds. Out of school hours the children had no such place to go. As the age of adolescence approached, the cafe, the pool-room, located in some abominable cellar, claimed the boys, and for the girls the only escape from the cluttered rooms was the movie or the dance hall.

BROTHERS AND SISTERS HARDLY ACQUAINTED

Some of the families in more comfortable quarters, a little bit more well-to-do than the rest, made a little pretense at family life and gathered the whole family around the supper table at night, but with many that was impossible. There were not enough chairs for all the family to sit down at once and there wasn't enough room to put all the members, if the chairs were there, so the members of the group rushed home whenever they felt hungry, snatched whatever eatables were available, and sped forth again to some more convenient haunts, so that your family life had become practically impossible.

Brothers and sister hardly knew one another. To this day I may ask a boy, "Where was your brother yesterday?" "I don't know." "Did you tell him so-and-so?" "Oh, I haven't spoken to my brother for a week." "How is that?" "Oh, he comes home after I have gone to bed and he gets up and goes away in the morning before I am up." And no communication has been possible between them.

The children in touch with American life in the school, in the workshop, in the office, have but one ambition, and that is to be extremely up-to-date, as they say, and it is easy for them to feel that the parent is reactionary, old-fashioned. The father and mother live and work among their own compatriots and hear nothing but the

mother tongue. The children hear nothing but English in the places where their real life is spent, and very soon the tongue of their fathers becomes unfamiliar.

I remember the shock that I received when this was first brought home to me on an occasion when I asked a child to take a message to her mother. She said, "I cannot tell my mother that." "Why not?" I demanded. "She don't speak English." "Well, then you tell her in Italian." "I can't say that in Italian." And she finally convinced me that she could only communicate with her mother on matters concerning food, shelter, the mere material things of existence. There was no possibility of sympathetic communication between them because there was no medium.

Deprived in this way of the support and sympathy which a child naturally seeks in the home, the boys turn naturally to the gang. I remember very well my first introduction to the gang.

Gangs were then flourishing in Cherry street. We subdued their activities very much since, but this day, the first day we were in possession of the new home, a noise arose in the street and on going to the window I discovered the street full of boys, each one armed with the largest bottle I have ever seen in my life, and in some sort of formation they straggled along until suddenly with remarkable precision they executed a tactical maneuver and disappeared. The street was cleared. The boys were under carts, under trucks, in doorways, wherever they could take cover, and then came the fusillade of glass from the opposing gang, which evidently was similarly armed.

As soon as the ammunition of the foe was exhausted, the Cherry street gang sallied out and in a few moments the sounding of glass indicated that they too had discharged their ammunition. At the time it seemed to me a fruitful evidence of juvenile deportment. Since then I learned to see that it was the natural exuberance of boyhood.

FACING THE BOY PROBLEM

There comes a time in the life of a boy when melodrama appeals to him, and the only gesture of that kind

that seemed possible to the boys at that time was the defiance of law and order as represented by the policeman, to stand perilously on the roof with a brick in one hand watching for the oncoming patrolman and to know the fearful joy of aiming that brick and calculating by just how many inches one had missed him.

Well now, after all, how does that differ from the urge which induces your John to don his tweeds, take his rifle and gun and go out shooting ducks on Long Island or hunting deer in the Adirondacks? A boy must do something. I don't hold any brief for the gangster. I don't mean to do that.

And not all their activities, of course, were innocent. Hold-ups used to be common in those days. We got used to screams and shouts and the rattling of police batons on the sidewalk. The gangsters were almost always half-grown lads who had fallen under the influence of some master criminal and were being exploited for his own selfish ends.

The boy problem was the first thing that we had to face, and, by the way, the small child who led that glass bomb squad that I was referring to was aged five at the time. I afterwards came to know him very well. He was the first boy registered in our day nursery and after he had been in the nursery for some months, his father, an unusually intelligent man, called on me one day and said he wanted to thank us for the improvement in his child. Of course, I was much gratified and I said, "Well, in what way has he improved?" thinking that he was going to tell me that he didn't pull that cat's tail or tease his little sister as formerly. "Well, you see," he said, "he used to go out and stay out all night, but now since he has been coming to the kindergarten he comes home."

The Christian population of the district was overwhelmingly Catholic. The Federation of Churches estimated the non-Catholic Christian population south of Fourteenth street at one-quarter of one per cent., and I personally never met anyone in the district, any Christian in the district, who was not a Catholic, so that we felt a particular responsibility for these outbreaks and we went down there, as I said, to try out an experiment. We had been told that the only way of reaching these children and

inducing them to come to religious instruction was the way of bribery. It is true that although it was a Catholic district, a large number of non-Catholic missions had been working among them and had employed that method to reach these people.

We were told that if we wanted to gather our own children around us we would be obliged to resort to the same means. We had no money. We had only a very small house. We could not compete with these well-equipped missions in this market of souls and we would not if we could. But we also knew the immigrants from Southern Europe and we felt convinced that such methods were not necessary. We didn't propose to attract these souls by anything but the cross of love, nor to give them any other inducement than the heart of a mother, and the results have justified us. We found one difficulty in filling our classes for religious instruction. In fact, they were only limited and are still only limited by the size of the house and the physical endurance of the Sisters.

We had another problem and that perhaps was even more serious; how to ensure the perseverance of these children in the practise of religion, morality and good citizenship. Just see how difficult that really is practically. Here is Jimmy, for instance; he is going to prepare for his First Communion because it is becoming now the proper thing in Cherry street to prepare for one's Communion. At first it was not the proper thing.

He comes then to prepare and for several months he is under intensive training. He was not in the habit of attending very many exercises of piety, but now he gets it, goes to Mass, frequently several times a week. He comes for instruction. Everything in the home is being made easy for him. The mother doesn't object to the disturbance of the family routine and little sister will run the errands so that he will be able to come for instruction. Everyone regards him with a tender solicitude and reverent awe. He holds the center of the little stage for the time, for Jimmy is going to make his First Holy Communion.

Well the great day comes and goes and with it ends the spiritual attention under which the whole family has been living. The mother feels it no longer necessary to

wake Jimmy up in time to get him out to church and nobody is especially interested in him. His First Communion was very important, but it seems that his second and third and fourth Communions do not rank with the same importance and the catechism which he had been saying and which he had come to love is now closed to him because other children are coming on. He is somewhat in the position of the family pet when the new baby has come.

It is really pathetic at the Madonna House after the period of the First Communion, when the door is besieged by small boys and girls and the front doorbell is continually ringing and a wistful little voice outside says, "Are there any Sisters today?" That's their way of asking, "Is there any instruction for them?" Where they picked it up, I don't know. And one is obliged to say, "No, there are no Sisters for you today because the Sisters are now occupied with other little boys and girls."

OVERCOMING THE CALL OF THE GANG

What a tremendous field is offered here for the zeal of devoted Catholic women. To insure the perseverance of these little souls, it means so much to those who have made so many good resolutions, but these resolutions are tender, delicate plans that have not yet crystallized into habits, and when poor Jimmy is thrown out again it is like exposing a hot-house plant to the cold, windy winter. The gang calls him back and he is very apt to go back again.

We foresaw that difficulty and we had tried to meet it as well as we could, but of course it is impossible to care for all. We have organized a series of activities so that when Jimmy passes through the First Communion class he goes directly now into the Boy Rangers. From the Boy Rangers he goes when he is twelve to the Boy Scouts and we try to keep him in the Boy Scouts until he gets to be eighteen, but as a rule when he gets to be seventeen he feels he is a man and we are obliged to let him go into the senior organization, a military organization, known as the Columbus Volunteers.

His little sister Carmelia passes into the Browning organization, from there to the Girl Scouts, and then to

one of the five girls' clubs. Those children who belong to these organizations are well looked after, but it is quite impossible for us to take in more than a small proportion of those who pass through our hands for religious instructions.

More than ten thousand children have been prepared by us for First Holy Communion, and you can see if we could have held on to all these children that we would require a building the size of an armory.

There is a tremendous field in the organization of follow-up work for those who have received the Sacrament and must be encouraged to persevere.

The most important thing is truly the formation of habits. As the old saying is, "Sow an act and reap a habit." Our aim is to form good character, the character of the good Catholic who must at the same time be a good citizen and the only way to do that is by the building up of habit. Of course we used to leave that to the home. The home was, as it were, the law, and the catechism class supplied the text-book. The child learned the formulas of prayer at Sunday-school and he learned the practise of prayer at his mother's knee. He memorized the Commandments of the Church, but it was the parents who formed the habit of hearing Mass on Sundays and holy days and contributing faithfully and regularly to the support of the Church.

But the home, as we have seen, has almost ceased to function, and that condition cannot be remedied until the housing condition of the poor of the lower East Side is improved. Meanwhile we must do what best we can to provide a kind of artificial home where children may be encouraged to persevere in the good habits which have begun in the catechism class and this is a problem which I foresee you will have also to face.

Citizenship, of course, is not excluded. The senior organization, the Columbus Volunteers, proved their loyalty to the country by providing 711 men, disciplined and trained, who went overseas in the late war. We haven't so many of them now, but still we have a fairly good company.

Such then is the work we have tried to do. As you see, we have been much hampered for lack of auxiliaries.

In our own district we could use almost an indefinite number of devoted ladies and special teachers, and the other districts of the city are practically in the same condition.

One thing we have tried to do with the select group that we work with. We have tried to correlate our religious teaching with the child's own expressions, to take the catechism out of the covers of a book and to translate it into terms of the child's own life, to make athletics, industrial classes, or whatever it may be, to make it all help towards the upbuilding of that character which is the aim of all our endeavors.

I know that when you have undertaken this work you will come across many problems, but I believe that if you will solve them in that spirit of love and sympathetic understanding, and if we try to induce the child to express himself, to give back to us in his own language and in his own way the terms of his own life, the truths that we have been trying to impart to him, that we will find much greater progress has been made than were we attempting to teach him by pouring knowledge into him. Sometimes one gets rather startling results in that way and still they are encouraging. For example, I once remember having a class of boys about fifteen or sixteen, and I was explaining to them in preparation for Palm Sunday something of the story of the day. The following session I asked for volunteers to repeat this story and one of the boys undertook to do so. When we came to the story of the Disciples coming to the crossroads where they found the ass and the colt, he said as they were untying the beasts the owner looked out and he said to them, "What are you doing with my animals?" and the Disciples said, "Aw, go on, the boss wants them."

Well, I had dwelt a little bit on the phrase, "The Lord hath need of them," because there were certain little sacrifices that seemed necessary that these boys should make, and I had been trying to give them that lesson and I thought evidently it had gone home, and so we felt that that was really encouraging.

Social service is something we are all interested in now, and we are apt to think of it as something quite modern, but after all, human needs have been the same all through the ages, and while the terminology is different I am

inclined to think that we have not found anything new after all.

St. Charles Borromeo, the great Archbishop, who founded the Confraternity, did not talk about case work or making an adjustment, and so forth. He spoke simply about saving souls; the term follow-up was nothing to him, but he sent out his missionaries to do that particular work, and it is well for us sometimes to go back and use these ancient instruments that have been hallowed by the use of centuries having the blessing of Holy Church upon them.